

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, AO

SUBJ: SOVIETS REAFFIRM TOUGH LINE ON ANGOLA

REF: MOSCOW 1526, MOSCOW 1360

1. SUMMARY. THE U.S. GETS TOP BILLING AMONG THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCES IN ANGOLA IN A HIGHLY AUTHORITATIVE PRAVDA "OBSERVER" ARTICLE. THE ARTICLE SPECIFICALLY TAKES ISSUE WITH THE SECRETARY'S SAN FRANCISCO SPEECH, CHARGING HIM INDIRECTLY WITH "STANDING THE FACTS ON THEIR HEAD" AND ASSERTING THAT THE STRUGGLE IS NOW, AS IT WAS BEFORE, BETWEEN LEGITIMATE LEBERATORS AND AN "ALLIANCE" OF FOREIGN INTERVENTIONISTS--THE U.S., SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA, IN THAT ORDER. THE ARTICLE SAYS LITTLE THAT IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEW, BUT FIRMLY REITERATES MOSCOW'S HARD LINE IN RESPONSE

TO THE SECRETARY'S SPEECH. IZVESTIYA ALSO CARRIES A MAJOR ANGOLA COMMENTARY BY MATVEYEV WHICH REPORTS ON THE RECENT CONFERENCE IN LUANDA IN SUPPORT OF THE MPLA. MATVEYEV SAYS THAT THE ANTI-MPLA FORCES ARE MELTING AWAY. SEVERAL SMALL ITEMS REPORT MPLA DIPLOMATIC AND MILITARY SUCCESSES AND REPLAY STORIES OF MERCENARY RECRUITMENT IN ENGLAND. END SUMMARY.

2. PRAVDA'S "OBSERVER" BEGINS BY DENOUNCING THE "DIS-INFORMATION" IN THE WESTERN PRESS, ESPECIALLY FROM "CERTAIN CIRCLES" IN THE U.S. WHICH "STANDS THE FACTS ON THEIR HEADS." PRAVDA LATER MENTIONS THE SECRETARY'S SAN FRANCISCO SPEECH EXPLICITLY AND SAYS THAT HIS CHARGES OF SOVIET INTERVENTION ARE "NOT IN ACCORD WITH THE FACTS OR LOGIC." "OBSERVER" CONTINUES ROUTINELY THAT THE MPLA HAS LED STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION AND HAS "PROGRESSIVE PROGRAM" (ALBEIT WITH NON-ALIGNMENT). THE STRUGGLE IS BETWEEN A YOUNG LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT AND ITS OPPONENTS, "AN ALLIANCE OF THE MOST REACTIONARY FORCES IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD--IMPERIALISTS, SOUTH AFRICAN RACISTS AND PEKING PROVOCATORS" WHICH IS USING MERCENARIES TO CARRY OUT ITS PLANS. TALK OF "CIVIL WAR" IS NOT ACCURATE, SAYS PRAVDA; THE ISSUE IS FOREIGN INTERVENTION. MOSCOW GIVES AID, SAYS PRAVDA, TO PREVENT A RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUE BY MILITARY MEANS, AND IT DOES NOT OPPOSE A POLITICAL SOLUTION. THE ANGOLA PROBLEM CAN ONLY BE RESOLVED, SAYS PRAVDA, BY THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES. BUT PRAVDA MAKES IT CLEAR THAT MOSCOW ASSUMES THE PRIMACY OF THE "LEGAL GOVERNMENT"; THE SOVIET UNION HAS AND WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE "FULL SUPPORT" TO THIS GOVERNMENT AND FAVORS THE MPLA'S EFFORTS TO CONSOLIDATE THE "PATRIOTIC FORCES."

3. IZVESTIYA (FEB 10) ALSO CARRIES A MAJOR COMMENTARY ON ANGOLA BY V. MATVEYEV, WHO WAS A MEMBER OF THE SOVIET DELEGATION TO THE FEB 2-4 "INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA" IN LUANDA. MATVEYEV DESCRIBES THE SITUATION IN LUANDA AS "NORMALIZING" AND RECOUNTS ANGOLAN PRAISE FOR SOVIET SUPPORT AT THE CONFERENCE. MATVEYEV REPORTS MPLA CHAIR-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MAN NETO'S REMARKS TO THE SOVIET DELEGATION ON ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, AND COMMENTS THAT ANTI-MPLA GROUPS ARE WEAKENING POLITICALLY AND ARE MELTING AWAY, "LIKE ICE UNDER SUNLIGHT."

4. IN OTHER ANGOLA-RELATED NEWS, PRAVDA CARRIES TASS ITEMS WHICH: (1) REPORT MPLA "LIBERATION" OF THE CITIES OF BENGELA AND LOBITU, (2) ANNOUNCE UGANDA'S DECISION

TO RECOGNIZE THE MPLA REGIME (REFLECTED ALREADY BY "OBSERVER'S" REMINDER THAT 26 AFRICAN STATES HAVE EXTENDED RECOGNITION), (3) REPORT A MAJOR SHAKE-UP IN THE ZAIRE GOVERNMENT, ALLEGEDLY BECAUSE OF OPPOSITION TO ANGOLAN POLICY, AND (4) REPLAY PRESS STORIES ABOUT ALLEGED CIA RECRUITMENT OF MERCENARIES IN THE UK TO SEND TO ANGOLA.

5. COMMENT. THE PRAVDA ARTICLE IS LONG AND FIRM, BUT EXCEPT FOR ITS DIRECT REFERENCES TO THE SECRETARY'S SPEECH, IT CONTAINS LITTLE THAT IS NEW AND READS VERY MUCH LIKE THE IZVESTIYA "OBSERVER" ARTICLE OF JAN 29 (SECOND REFTEL). THE MOST LIKELY MOTIVE WE SEE FOR HIGH-LEVEL REAFFIRMATION OF SOVIET ANGOLA LINE NOW IS TO KEEP RECORD STRAIGHT FOLLOWING THE SECRETARY'S SAN FRANCISCO SPEECH AND BEFORE CPSU PARTY CONGRESS. WE TEND TO DISCOUNT POSSIBILITY THAT "OBSERVER'S" TOUGH LINE IS INTENDED TO COVER SOVIET FLEXIBILITY ON THE GROUND IN AFRICA. JUXTAPOSITION OF "OBSERVER" AND MATVEYEV'S COMMENT ON DISINTEGRATION OF FNLA AND UNITA SUGGESTS THAT WHEN SOVIETS TALK OF CONSOLIDATION OF PATRIOTIC FORCES, THEY MEAN ABSORPTION OF FNLA AND UNITA FORCES UNDER MPLA.
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